

# 10.1.08 | Madame Bovary

## Schedule:

1. Attendance & Questions?
2. DQ wrap-up
3. Bovary Q1
4. Class discussion
5. HW – Finish Madame Bovary.

## Goal[s]:

- Assess attitudes toward immersion.
- Analyze immersive potential of third-person realism.

# Let's back up to move forward.

- How many of you have been “immersed” by some media already today?
- What do you think of immersion?
  - Good? Bad?
  - Beneficial? Dangerous?
  - Bain of society? Welcome escape?

# Yesterday...

- We talked about Don Quixote as a layered story, tales of a mad man framed by a fictional history of collecting these tales.
- What then is Cervantes' *Don Quixote* about?
- One way to read the book is as a reflection *on reading*.
- If we look at it that way, what does it have to say?

# Some context for DQ:

- When was this published?
  - 1605
- Why might that be important?
  - Spread of Printing press in Spain 1472 – 1499, which means book culture is relatively new.
  - It may sound odd, but reading alone was a pretty new phenomenon. Before easy printing, individuals simply didn't have books, so groups read together.
  - DQ, set in this context, becomes a figure for an immerging culture of print, reading alone, books of chivalry [as the printing industry scrambled to find content to sell they went back to old stories, particularly medieval romances].

# What about the DQ?

- Now, of course, as with any new form of media, there was cultural anxiety. Think of the objection timeline: video games, television, comics, rap/punk/rock/jazz music, movies, novels, reading alone, reading on your own.
- So, if DQ becomes a figure for the immersing culture of print reading, the obvious question is how is this figure presented? What is the text's opinion of the mad knight errant?

# Questions to think about:

- What is the text's opinion of books?
- What about immersion?
- How about DQ?
  
- Note as well how conflicted our class even seems on the notion of immersion. How comfortable were *you* with the suggestion that you might be similar to DQ?

# On to Bovary...

- Now, moving on to Bovary, we drop, for the most part, Cervantes's artifice of the framing story. We also drop the "exaggeration" of Quixote as the crazy reader for a more "realistic" novel.
- We will find, though, that many of the same questions apply:
  - What is the book's opinion of books?
  - Are characters immersed? How is that characterized?
  - What does this book have to say about reading? What role does reading play in this book?

# Today's question:

- **Why did Charles Bovary allow the women in his life control him? Why didn't he take control once he married Emma?**
- “But it was not everything to have brought up a son, to have had him taught medicine, and discovered Tostes, where he could practice it; he must have a wife. [Madame Bovary]...found him one—the widow of a bailiff at Dieppe—who was forty-five and had an income of twelve hundred francs”(Flaubert 6).
- “Charles had seen in marriage the advent of an easier life, thinking he would be more free to do as he liked with himself and his money. But his wife was master; he had to say this and not say that in company, to fast every Friday, dress as she liked, harass at her bidding those patients who did not pay. She opened his letter, watched his comings and goings, and listened at the partition-wall when women came to consult him in his surgery”(Flaubert 7).
- “Charles knew not what to answer: he respected his mother, and he loved his wife infinitely; he considered the judgment of the other infallible, and yet he thought the conduct of the other irreproachable. When Madam Bovary had gone, he tried timidly and in the same terms to hazard one or two of the more anodyne observations he had heard from his mamma. Emma proved to him with a word that he was mistaken, and sent him off to his patients”(Flaubert 25).

### Small Groups.

Find four partners,  
maybe some folks  
you haven't  
worked with yet.

- We will do small groups everyday. The day's presenter[s] will offer their questions.
- You will have between 10 and 15 minutes to discuss the question with your group.
- At the end of discussion time, have someone in your group write up a paragraph or so summarizing the position your group came to on the back of the question sheet.
  - **NB> This will be turned in.**

# For next time

- Read *Madame Bovary*.
  - Again, another iconic immersed reader; again, we are looking at attitudes toward immersion, characterizations of immersion.
  - Flaubert cited Cervantes specifically as inspiration. We will certainly compare.
  - Pay particular attention to the perspective/access you are given as reader. *Bovary* is a representative example of “Realism”.